



# **The WisDOT Connector *Express***

January 18, 2007 ... Volume 8, Issue 1

## **Legislature sets leadership/committee posts**

Listed below are recently-announced leadership posts and committee membership for the Wisconsin State Legislature that are of interest to the transportation community:

### State Senate

President - Fred Risser, D-Madison  
President Pro Tempore - Tim Carpenter, D-Milwaukee  
Majority leader - Judith Robson, D-Beloit  
Minority leader - Scott Fitzgerald, R-Juneau

### State Assembly

Speaker - Mike Huebsch, R-West Salem  
Speaker Pro Tempore - Mark Gottlieb, R-Port Washington  
Majority leader - Jeff Fitzgerald, R-Beaver Dam  
Minority leader - James Kreuser, D-Kenosha

### Joint Committee on Finance

Sen. Russ Decker, D-Schofield, co-chair  
Sen. Dave Hansen, D-Green Bay  
Sen. Lena Taylor, D-Milwaukee  
Sen. Robert Jauch, D-Poplar  
Sen. Mark Miller, D-Monona  
Sen. John Lehman, D-Racine  
Sen. Albert Darling, R-River Hills  
Sen. Luther Olsen, R-Ripon  
Rep. Kitty Rhoades, R-Hudson, co-chair  
Rep. Dan Meyer, R-Eagle River  
Rep. Jeff Stone, R-Greendale  
Rep. Steve Kestell, R-Elkhart Lake  
Rep. Scott Suder, R-Abbotsford  
Rep. Robin Vos, R-Caledonia  
Rep. Mark Pocan, D-Madison  
Rep. Pedro Colon, D-Milwaukee

### Assembly Committee on Transportation

Rep. Jerry Petrowski, R-Marathon, chair  
Rep. Garey Bies, R-Sister Bay  
Rep. Al Ott, R-Forest Junction  
Rep. Eugene Hahn, R-Cambria  
Rep. Mark Gottlieb, R-Port Washington

Rep. Karl Van Roy, R-Green Bay  
Rep. Brett Davis, R-Oregon  
Rep. John Steinbrink, D-Pleasant Prairie  
Rep. Amy Sue Vruwink, D-Milladore  
Rep. Mike Sheridan, D-Janesville  
Rep. Gary Sherman, D-Port Wing  
Rep. Phil Garthwaite, D-Fennimore

#### Senate Transportation, Tourism and Insurance Committee

Sen. Roger Breske, D-Eland, chair  
Sen. Jeff Plale, D-South Milwaukee  
Sen. Jon Erpenbach, D-Middleton  
Sen. Dave Hansen, D-Green Bay  
Sen. Dan Kapanke, R-La Crosse  
Sen. Dale Schultz, R-Richland Center  
Sen. Joe Leibham, R-Sheboygan

#### **Federal transportation financing in flux**

There is still considerable uncertainty surrounding the future of the federal fiscal year (FFY) 2007 transportation appropriations bill. An appropriations measure was initially to have passed last fall. Following the fall elections, Congress approved a continuing resolution (CR) that continues FFY 2007 funding at FFY 2006 levels through February 15, 2007. Congress is expected to approve another extension. Wisconsin was slated to receive federal funding for specific highway, transit and aviation projects in the appropriations bill through the earmarking process. Formula funding levels for highways, transit and aviation are also expected to be lower if approved at the FFY 2006 level. WisDOT is continuing to analyze potential impacts of the federal budgetary situation on Wisconsin and is keeping the state's Congressional delegation informed.

#### **Several state DOT's under new leadership**

Current WisDOT Secretary Frank Busalacchi is looking forward to continuing his service as head of the Wisconsin DOT. Meanwhile, several other state DOT's have announced new leaders for their transportation agencies including:

Maryland - John Porcari (former state transportation secretary)  
Massachusetts - Bernard Cohen (former director, FTA's Lower Manhattan Recovery Office)  
Nevada - Susan Martinovich (former Nevada DOT deputy director and 22-year DOT employee)  
Idaho - Pamela Lowe (former Idaho DOT deputy director)  
Rhode Island - Jerome Williams (currently director of the state's Department of Administration)  
Hawaii - Barry Fukanaga (currently deputy director in the Harbors Division)

#### **Grace period over for booster seat law**

As of January 1, 2007, Wisconsin police officers can issue citations for violations of the recently-enacted child booster seat law. The law requires that children in vehicles be properly restrained in booster seats from age 4 until they reach age 8. When the measure first took effect last June, police officers could only issue warnings for a first violation. However, the "grace" period has ended, allowing officers to issue citations. Act 106 also makes it the driver's responsibility to ensure everyone, regardless of age, is buckled up in a vehicle. More information is available at:

<http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/news/2006/opa-229.htm>.

**Hiawatha sets annual ridership record**

More people rode Amtrak's Hiawatha Service between Milwaukee and Chicago last year than ever before. More than 588,000 people rode the rails during 2006, the most since the state of Wisconsin began supporting the service with Illinois in 1989. December also marked the 26th straight month in which ridership broke a record for that particular month, with more than 51,000 people taking the train. The Hiawatha Service provides up to 7 round trips daily between Milwaukee and Chicago

**Feds approve Wisconsin highway safety plan**

The U.S. Department of Transportation has approved the 2006 – 2008 Wisconsin Strategic Highway Safety Plan. The document provides background and information about highway safety in Wisconsin and lays out strategies for WisDOT and its many safety partners to address key safety issues. The document can be found on the WisDOT Web site at:

<http://www.dot.state.wi.us/library/publications/topic/safety.htm>.

*The WisDOT Connector Express* is produced by:

Wisconsin Department of Transportation  
Office of Public Affairs  
PO Box 7910  
Madison, WI 53707-7910  
Phone: (608) 266-3581  
Fax: (608) 266-7186  
E-mail: [opa.exec@dot.state.wi.us](mailto:opa.exec@dot.state.wi.us)  
Web site: [www.dot.wisconsin.gov](http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov)

Back issues available at [www.dot.wisconsin.gov/library/publications/format/newsletters/connector.htm](http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/library/publications/format/newsletters/connector.htm)